

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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TAGS: CI, ELAB

SUBJ: CHILEAN UNION CONFEDERATION STILLBORN - NATIONAL
COMMISSION FORMED

ATTN ARA/LA/MRSD O'GRADY

REF: (A) SANTIAGO 4613; (B) SANTIAGO 2655

1. SUMMARY. TOP CHILEAN LABOR LEADERS MET DURING FIRST DAYS OF SEPT TO SALVAGE WHAT REMAINS OF STILLBORN NATIONAL CONFEDERATION, CENASI, AND ORGANIZE INFORMAL COUNCIL OF TOP TRADE UNION LEADERS WHICH UNTIL PRESENT HAS SIMPLY BEEN REFERRED TO AS THE "UNION COUNCIL" (COMISION SINDICAL - CS). LEADERS HAD HOPED THAT THEIR COOPERATION WITH GOC WOULD RESULT IN AUTHORIZATION OF UNITED LABOR FRONT THAT WOULD BE IN POSITION EVENTUALLY TO BARGAIN AND HAVE SOME INFLUENCE IN GOC. THEY HAVE INSTEAD LOST GROUND, SINCE NEW LABOR COUNCIL IS NOT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED AND HAS LITTLE POTENTIAL FOR INFLUENCE. SOME LABOR LEADERS ARE ALSO LOSING FAITH IN THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING WITH GOC. END SUMMARY.

2. TOP LEADERS OF NATIONAL UNION CENTRAL (CENASI -FORMED LAST SPRING BUT NEVER RECOGNIZED MET SEP 5-6 WITH SEVERAL MAJOR LEADERS WHO HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN CENASI AND FORMED NEW, LOOSELY ORGANIZED NATIONAL UNION

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COUNCIL WHICH THEY CALL ONLY BY NAME OF

"COMISION SINDICAL." AS YET CS HAS
ADOPTED NO CONSTITUTION OR BY-LAWS OR
PUBLISHED STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

3. SEVERAL CS LEADERS TOLD LABATT THAT ALTHOUGH CS PLANS TO MEET
AT LEAST BI-MONTHLY AND TAKE STRONGEST STANCE POSSIBLE UNDER
PRESENT RESTRICTIONS ON LABOR, THEY ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT CS
ABILITY TO SPEAK EFFECTIVELY FOR CHILEAN LABOR. THEY HAVE MET WITH
NEW MINLABOR DIAZ AND DISCUSSED THEIR INTENTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS
IN DETAIL. THEY INDICATED THEY WERE POLITELY RECEIVED, GIVEN PER-
MISSION TO PROCEED WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS, AND PROMISED
THAT MINISTER WOULD "CONSULT WITH THEM ON MATTERS OF
IMPORTANCE TO LABOR."

4. EDUARDO RIOS, FORMER PRES OF CENASI AND STILL PRES OF
MARITIME WORKERS CONFED (COMACH), WAS SELECTED TO "PRESIDE"
OVER CS, AND LEADERS WHO FORMED CENASI HAVE MAJORITY IN CS.
EX-CUT/SANTIAGO LEADER MANUEL RODRIGUEZ WAS NOT SELECTED AS
MEMBER OF CS BUT IS WELL REPRESENTED BY INCLUSION OF MUNOZ
OF METALWORKERS AND ORTEGA OF BANK WORKERS. RODRIGUEZ ALSO
EXTRACTED PLEDGE FROM GROUP THAT "CATS" WHICH HE HEADS WILL
BE OFFICIAL EDUCATIONAL ARM OF CS. MUJICA, MUNOZ, ORTEGA AND
GUILLERMO MEDINA ARE CONSIDERED TO BE MILD TO STRONG
SUPPORTERS OF JUNTA, AS, OF COURSE, IS RODRIGUEZ.

5. CS COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE:

GUILLERMO SANTAN, PRES COPPER WORKERS CONFED (CTC)
TUCAPEL JIMENEZ, PRES GOVT EMPLOYEES CONFED (ANEF)
FEDERICO MUJICA, PRES WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES CONFED (CEPCH)
GUSTAVO DIAZ, PRES "LIBERTAD" COMPESINO CONFED
PEDRO BRICENO, PRES UNION STEELWORKERS OF CAP (CONCEPCION)
CLAUDIO ASTUDILLO, PRES WHITE-COLLAR CONFED (CEIC)
ERNESTO VOGEL, PRES RAILROAD WORKERS FED (FIF)
OSVALDO MUNOZ, PRES METALWORKERS FED
WASHINGTON SEPULVEDA, PRES PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS FED (FENATS)
CARLOS ORTEGA, PRES BANK WORKERS FED
GUILLERMO MEDINA, PRES "ZONAL EL TENIENTE" (TENIENTE MINE
UNIONS' COUNCIL, WHICH IS PART OF COPPER WORKERS CONFED)

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ONE MEMBER/LEADER FROM PLASTICS INDUSTRY TO BE SELECTED IN FUTURE.

6. COMMENT. POSSIBILITY EXPRESSED IN REF (A) OF FORMATION OF
UNITED LABOR FRONT THAT COULD INFLUENCE GOC HAS NOT COME ABOUT,
AND FORMATION OF CS CAN BE INTERPRETED ONLY AS A CONSIDERABLE
LOSS OF GROUND FOR CHILEAN LABOR. THE "COMISION" CAN AT BEST
PLAY ONLY A HAT-IN-HAND ADVISORY ROLE. LACKING GOVERNMENTAL
RECOGNITION, IT CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN BARGAINING (EVEN IF BARGAINING

WERE GOING ON) OR NEGOTIATE WITH GOVERNMENT; NOR WILL IT HAVE SUPPORTING DUES STRUCTURE.

7. RECOGNITION OF CENASI AS A CONFEDERATION WAS PROMISED LEADERS FOR DEFENDING CHILE AT LAST JUNE'S ILO MEETING (REF B), AND AGAIN TO LEADERS WHO WENT TO MORE RECENT ITF CONGRESS IN STOCKHOLM AND DID THEIR BEST TO DEFEND DIFFICULT CHILEAN POSITION. GOC FAILURE TO HONOR ITS PROMISES HAS PRODUCED LOSS OF FAITH AMONG SEVERAL TOP LABOR LEADERS. MORE THAN ONE HAS CONFIDED THAT HE BELIEVES WORD OF THIS GOVERNMENT NO MORE THAN THAT OF ITS PREDECESSOR.

8. REAL TRUCE BETWEEN RODRIGUEZ AND RIOS FACTIONS OF MOVEMENT COULD TEND TO STRENGTHEN LABOR MOVEMENT, BUT FEW TOP LEADERS OF CS BELIEVE PRESENT PACT WILL SURVIVE END OF YEAR, CONSIDERING MERCURIAL AND AMBITIOUS CHARACTER OF RODRIGUEZ.
POPPER

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